

Application No. 10/633,880
Amendment dated April 5, 2006
After Final Office Action of March 27, 2006

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Canceled):

Claim 2 (Canceled):

Claim 3 (Canceled):

Claim 4 (Canceled):

Claim 5 (Canceled):

Claim 6 (Canceled):

Claim 7 (Currently amended): An apparatus, comprising:

a shaft having a gripping end and a distal end remote from said gripping end; and

a shaper disposed at the distal end, said shaper including:

a scoop, fixed to the distal end of the shaft at an attachment location, including a first cavity collecting and holding a bolus of a compressible medium, the compressible medium retaining a post-compressed shape, the cavity generally semi-spherical and including an opening for receiving the bolus, the opening defining a plane generally disposed parallel to a longitudinal axis of the shaft; and

a former including a second cavity cooperating with the first cavity, hingedly coupled to the shaft proximate the attachment location without extending into a second handle and mating with the scoop, cooperating with the scoop to mold and compress the bolus into a generally spherical ball retained within the shaper using single-handed operation. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein the scoop and the former include opposing sections of a generally spherical shell, wherein the former includes an open position relative to the scoop and a closed

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position relative to the scoop, the former molding the bolus in the closed position, and wherein the former is biased to the open position.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the former is operable to the closed position by one-handed manipulation of a proximal end of the shaft.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 7 further comprising a latching mechanism, coupled to said former, for inhibiting said former from returning to said open position.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising a release, coupled to said latching mechanism and operable from said gripping end, for disengaging said latching mechanism and removing said inhibition of said former.

Claim 11 (Canceled):

Claim 12 (Canceled):

Claim 13 (Canceled):

Claim 14 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 37 wherein ski pole includes a snow basket on the first distal end.

Claim 15 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the scoop is part of the snow basket.

Claim 16 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the scoop is part of the former.

Claim 17 (Canceled):

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Claim 18 (Currently amended): An apparatus, comprising:

a shaft having a gripping end and a distal end remote from said gripping end; and

a shaper disposed at the distal end, said shaper including:

a scoop, fixed to the distal end of the shaft at an attachment location, including a first cavity collecting and holding a bolus of a compressible medium, the compressible medium retaining a post-compressed shape, the cavity generally semi-spherical and including an opening for receiving the bolus, the opening defining a plane generally disposed parallel to a longitudinal axis of the shaft; and

a former including a second cavity cooperating with the first cavity, hingedly coupled to the shaft proximate the attachment location without extending into a second handle and mating with the scoop, cooperating with the scoop to mold and compress the bolus into a generally spherical ball retained within the shaper using single-handed operation~~The apparatus of claim 17, wherein said shaft and said scoop are coupled together using a mating system, and wherein said mating system includes a threaded member coupled to one of said shaft and said scoop and a complementary member coupled to one of said shaft and said scoop.~~

Claim 19 (Canceled):

Claim 20 (Canceled):

Claim 21 (Canceled):

Claim 22 (Canceled):

Claim 23 (Previously presented): An apparatus, comprising:

a shaft;

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a scoop, fixed to a distal end of said shaft at an attachment location, for collecting and holding an object within a cavity, said cavity including an opening for receiving the object wherein said opening is defined generally within a plane and said plane is disposed generally parallel to a general longitudinal axis of said shaft;
a trapper, hingedly coupled to said shaft at said attachment location and mating with said scoop, for retaining said object within the scoop when in a closed position, said trapper biased to an open position wherein said object may be collected and/or released; and
a latching mechanism, coupled to said trapper, for inhibiting said trapper from returning to said open position.

Claim 24 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 23 further comprising a release, coupled to said latching mechanism and proximate to a proximal end of said shaft, for remotely disengaging said latching mechanism and removing said inhibition of said trapper.

Claim 25 (Canceled):

Claim 26 (Canceled):

Claim 27 (Canceled):

Claim 28 (Canceled):

Claim 29 (Currently amended): An apparatus, comprising:
a shaft having a proximal end for gripping by a user during operation
and a distal end remote from said proximal end; and
a forming system disposed at said distal end at an attachment
location, said forming system including:
a first forming element, fixed to said shaft at said attachment location,
having a first cavity for collecting and shaping a bolus of snow; and

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a second forming element, moveably coupled to said shaft proximate said attachment location, having a second cavity mating with said first cavity cooperatively shaping said bolus of snow into a generally spherical ball using single-handed operation. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein said first forming element includes an open position relative to said second forming element and a closed position relative to said second forming element, said forming system molding said bolus in said closed position, and wherein the forming system is biased to the open position.

Claim 30 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 29 wherein the forming system is operable to the closed position by one-handed manipulation of said proximal end of the shaft.

Claim 31 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 29 further comprising a latching mechanism, coupled to said forming system, for inhibiting said forming system from returning to said open position.

Claim 32 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 31 further comprising a release, coupled to said latching mechanism and operable from said proximal end, for disengaging said latching mechanism and removing said inhibition of said forming system.

Claim 33 (Canceled):

Claim 34 (Canceled):

Claim 35 (Canceled):

Claim 36 (Canceled):

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Claim 37 (Previously presented): An apparatus, comprising:

a shaft having a gripping end and a distal end remote from said gripping end; and
a shaper disposed at the distal end, said shaper including:
a scoop, coupled to the distal end of the shaft at an attachment location, including a first cavity for collecting and holding a bolus of a compressible medium, the compressible medium retaining a post-compressed shape; and
a former including a second cavity cooperating with the first cavity, coupled to the scoop proximate the attachment location and mating with the scoop, for cooperating with the scoop for molding and compressing the bolus into a generally spherical ball retained within the shaper, wherein the shaft includes a ski pole.